

Murray History Advisory Board
Minutes for April 27, 2010

Attendance: Susan Wright, David Adams, Steve Meyers, Jay Bollwinkel, Mary Ann Kirk (staff), Kirk Huffacker and Elizabeth Bradley (Heritage Foundation)

1. Minutes for March 23, 2010 were approved.
2. Mary Ann reviewed the recommendation by Jenny Lund regarding the antiques from the Townsend home. Unless the board members feel differently, she will not purchase the items because they have no connection to Murray history. We would have to store them because there is no room in the museum and we don't know if they would ever be used in a new museum exhibit. Jenny Lund felt it was better to design the story of your museum first and then find the items needed. Board members agreed.
3. Kirk Huffacker explained that the Utah Heritage Foundation is a non-profit statewide organization that educates people on the benefits of historic preservation. He explained a private tool called easements. A private property owner can enter a legal agreement with the Heritage Foundation that creates a partnership to review and approve any exterior changes to the building for owners - current or future. This is a tool for owners that have invested money in preserving a building and want to protect it from demolition or changes to exterior character defining features in perpetuity. The agreement outlines the features that must be protected and is included on the title. The Heritage Foundation has 118 easement properties statewide and can choose whether they want to create an agreement or not with a property owner who would like to create an easement. Future owners cannot later decide to dissolve the agreement. Mary Ann indicated that the Bradford family is considering an easement on the Bradford home. Kirk clarified an easement can include the entire property because it maintains the context of the historic structure. There are fees to the owner for an easement donation because of the administrative costs that will occur over time. CLG funds can be used to cover fees for easements. There is a one-time tax benefit with an easement donation that reflects changes in zoning and how that affects the difference in value of the property. Easements can work in tandem with historic districts. Steve asked if the easement can be rescinded by future owners. Kirk said there are only two ways to rescind an easement through condemnation or through district court. The Heritage Foundation takes the easements very seriously because the owner has given up money to create an easement. The easement document is very powerful. The Heritage Foundation tries to educate new property owners immediately so they understand the legal document. Some new owners have not taken the time to read the title report which includes the easement. The Utah Foundation is responsible to see that the easement is enforced.
4. Mary Ann reviewed the role of the board related to historic preservation which is to identify the historic assets in the community and then how to preserve them. We have created criteria for the registry but it does not include any protection and does not prioritize the most important landmarks. Jay noted that an easement precludes anything

happening to that historic element in perpetuity. The DHOD and the newly proposed downtown area are the only situations that currently have restrictions. We need to identify mechanisms that can help us preserve critical buildings including funding sources. Some communities have created 501 c 3 organizations to preserve buildings such as Draper Historical Society who has saved several homes from demolitions. We have never tried to fund raise, but we may need to talk about more aggressive preservation.

5. The board reviewed criteria that is currently used to determine contributing and significant buildings in the DHOD. The key difference between contributing and significant buildings is the level of historic and architectural significance and impact on the historic character of the area. Mary Ann noted that the downtown district will no longer focus on historic character of the area. She suggested we need specific criteria for the significant buildings in the new downtown center so our recommendations are objective - not just because we don't like a particular building. The ordinance will include protection and a design review process for significant historic buildings. Board members felt the wording in the DHOD was still relevant to the new district.

Significant historic building criteria:

1. Has major historical significance associated with significant events, activities, or persons in the history and development of Murray.
2. Has major architectural significance by reflecting a particular architectural style or time period at least 50 years or older and retains its character defining elements.
3. Any alterations that have compromised its character defining features can reasonable be reversed in whole or part.

Steve asked why it was 50 years. Mary Ann explained that is the age that qualifies a building for the national register. The criteria wording for the DHOD does not consider the condition of the building or the potential use of the surrounding property. Steve wondered if there should be some wiggle room for different situations. He wondered if this would prevent a city planner from modernizing the downtown area to bring more business in. Mary Ann passed out the information prepared for an earlier discussion several years ago that considered another process to determine hardship. Mary Ann said an architect has the ability to incorporate a historic building in a new development. Jay said it can be done with some creativity. Mary Ann explained the previous architect did in fact incorporate the Hoffman Building into a new development proposal. Mary Ann said the new ordinance will not have as much of a height restriction on new construction so that will improve infill profitability. One of the problems to retaining the Hoffman building may be related to the small driveway between the building and the Murray Mercantile. Kirk described an example of a similar building in Salt Lake on Main Street that features a covered glass entryway as a pass-through between several other tall buildings to a covered parking garage. Jay said the Hoffman building could be adjusted to include a doorway into the building from the walk way. Susan thought it made sense to keep the three buildings together if the Hoffman Building rehab can be done. Susan asked about where a parking structure would go. If the city owns this property, could it

be built there. Jay said you would not want a parking structure on State Street. Mary Ann suggested the performing arts center could go in this location and incorporate the historic building into the design.

Kirk suggested we work closely with the consultants to make sure the ordinance retains the historic setback. Mary Ann said that was already considered and the ordinance will do that. David suggested that Mary Ann bring the suggested criteria wording for a formal recommendation by the board for inclusion in the new ordinance next month.

6. Using the proposed criteria, Mary Ann asked the board how the Hoffman Building and Arlington School (City Hall) should be designated. She distributed material that described the history and architectural significance of the Hoffman Building including a new summary and comparison to the Iris Apartments (Desert Star). Jay asked if it had major architectural significance. He liked the original architecture more than the 1920 remodel. Mary Ann asked them to compare it to the Iris Apartments. It doesn't have all the fancy ornamental elements because the 1920s architectural style didn't feature that. Although it has not been maintained well, it actually retains its architectural features more than most of the other historic buildings.

The owners of the original Hoffman building and the 1920 remodel were all influential individuals in the development of Murray and the building features the simple 1920 architectural time period. The architectural statement is strengthened by the three historic buildings that stand next to each other. Using the proposed criteria, the board recommended that the Hoffman Building be returned to the significant list. Board members agreed that the protection needs to be disclosed to any potential future owner.

However, City Hall does not meet the criteria because the changes on the front which substantially altered the defining architectural features cannot be reasonably reversed.

7. Board members discussed how to define a landmark versus a significant building outside of the DHOD. Kirk said the ordinance needs to be easy to understand. He suggested it be the same criteria as the DHOD. Mary Ann explained the local register uses the same language as the National Register and we haven't felt a need to protect all of the A buildings. She thought it should be a step above the A buildings. It would include buildings like the Murray 2nd Ward, Ore Sampling Mill, Bennion Flour Mill, and the Power building. Kirk said Salt Lake has 165 designated sites that are protected as significant buildings. They have provided incentives for being designated such as parking and signage flexibility and are considering giving them priority in LEEDS certification and the building permit process. Board members decided they would like to go on a tour next month of potential landmarks that might be worthy of ordinance protection. Steve suggested we could talk about wording while on the tour.
8. Other future agenda items could include goals and priority projects and museum needs.